

Message Text

SECRET

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FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 6539

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 PRETORIA 0005

NODIS

DEPT PASS TO THE SECRETARY

FOR SCHAUFLE FROM EDMONDSON

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PFOR RH
SUBJ: IVOR RICHARD'S RHODESIA VISIT, JANUARY 1-2, 1977

1. SUMMARY. RICHARD CHARACTERIZED HIS VISIT WITH SMITH AS "DISAPPOINTING BUT NOT HOPELESS." SMITH REPEATEDLY REFERRED TO HIS "CONTRACT" AND SHOWED RELATIVELY LITTLE INTEREST IN DETAILS OF RICHARD'S PROPOSALS, ARGUING THAT A BRITISH COMMISSIONER WOULD NOT BE ACCEPTABLE TO THE WHITE RHODESIANS. DESPITE HIS ALMOST TOTALLY NEGATIVE ATTITUDE, SMITH REMAINS WILLING TO TALK AND SAID HE WOULD CONSIDER WHETHER TO SUGGEST SOME IDEAS OF HIS OWN FOR IMPLEMENTING ANNEX C WHEN RICHARD RETURNS IN ABOUT TEN DAYS. REPRESENTATIVES OF OTHER WHITE GROUPS WHOM RICHARD MET WERE UNENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT A BRITISH ROLE BUT WILLING TO ACCEPT IT AS THE ONLY WAY OUT OF RHODESIA'S DETERIORATING SITUATION. RICHARD EXPECTS THAT VORSTER, LIKE SMITH, WILL PRESS FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF ANNEX C BUT HOPES THAT HE WILL BE LESS NEGATIVE ABOUT PROPOSALS FOR A CENTRAL BRITISH ROLE. IN THE FINAL ANALYSIS, RICHARD BELIEVES THAT THE IDEA OF A BRITISH COMMISSIONER CAN BE SOLD TO SMITH ONLY IF IT CAN BE COMBINED WITH A GUARANTEED

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CESSATION OF GUERRILLA WARFARE AND LIFTING OF SANCTIONS, AND THAT EVEN THIS MAY REQUIRE SOME "LEANING" ON SMITH AND THE SOUTH AFRICANS. END SUMMARY.

2. DURING BRIEF STOPOVER AT WATERKLOOF AIR BASE NEAR PRETORIA LATE AFTERNOON JANUARY 2, ENROUTE FROM SALISBURY TO PORT ELIZABETH, IVOR RICHARD BRIEFED AMBASSADOR BOWDLER

AND ME AND BRITISH AMBASSADOR SCOTT ON HIS VISIT TO SALISBURY. HE HAD TWO-HOUR SESSION WITH IAN SMITH ON JANUARY 1, SOME OF WHICH GOT QUITE HEATED. SMITH WAS PERSONALLY ABUSIVE ABOUT RICHARD'S FAILURE TO INTRODUCE ANNEX C IN GENEVA AND SELL IT TO THE AFRICANS. HE REPEATEDLY SPOKE OF THE FIVE-POINT "CONTRACT" ON WHICH HE BASED HIS SEPTEMBER 24 ANNOUNCEMENT AND SAID THAT IF THE BRITISH WANTED TO DISCUSS OTHER PROPOSALS THEY SHOULD GIVE HIM A LETTER TO SAY THE CONTRACT WAS NO LONGER VALID AND THAT HE WAS FREE TO CONSIDER OTHER OPTIONS.

3. CONTRARY TO HIS FORECAST TO ME IN LUSAKA, RICHARD SAID HE DID NOT GO INTO AS MUCH DETAIL ABOUT THE BRITISH PROPOSAL WITH SMITH AS HE HAD WITH KAUNDA, PRIMARILY BECAUSE SMITH SHOWED LITTLE INTEREST IN THE DETAILS, PREFERRING INSTEAD TO ARGUE PHILOSOPHICALLY ABOUT THE GENERAL CONCEPT OF A BRITISH ROLE. RICHARD SAID THAT HE OUTLINED THE BRITISH PROPOSAL TO SMITH IN MUCH THE SAME GENERAL TERMS AS IN THE "SPEAKING NOTE" THE BRITISH PROPOSED FOR OUR POSSIBLE USE WITH SOUTH AFRICA (MINUS THE INTRODUCTORY SECTION ABOUT THE RHODESIAN DELEGATION'S BEHAVIOR IN GENEVA). SMITH KEPT ASSERTING, HOWEVER, THAT A BRITISH COMMISSIONER WOULD NOT BE ACCEPTED BY THE WHITE RHODESIANS, AND AT ONE POINT EVEN MAINTAINED THAT THEY WOULD RATHER CONTINUE FIGHTING A WAR THAN ACCEPT SUCH AN OFFICIAL. AT ANOTHER POINT, SMITH, IN RESPONSE TO QUESTIONING, TOLD RICHARD THAT A NON-BRITISH RESIDENT COMMISSIONER WOULD BE EQUALLY UNACCEPTABLE.

4. SMITH DID NOT SEEM INTERESTED IN THE VARIOUS PROPOSALS
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FOR A NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL, NOR DID HE FOCUS ON THE POSSIBILITY THAT SOME OF THE ADDITIONAL WHITE MINISTERS APPOINTED BY THE INTERIM COMMISSIONER MIGHT NOT BE FROM THE RHODESIA FRONT. (IN A SEPARATE MEETING BETWEEN MANSFIELD AND GAYLARD, HOWEVER, GAYLARD NOTED THIS FEATURE WITHOUT INDICATING ANY PARTICULAR OBJECTION TO IT.) SMITH KEPT RETURNING TO HIS CLAIMS OF A CONTRACT AND OF BETRAYAL AT GENEVA, NOTING THAT HE HAD BEEN GIVEN REPEATED ASSURANCES THAT HE WOULD NOT BE PRESSED TO GO BEYOND ANNEX C. IN SPITE OF THIS, HE WANTED TO KNOW WHEN RICHARD PLANNED TO RETURN TO SALISBURY (RICHARD SAID HE WOULD RETURN IN ABOUT TEN DAYS) AND INDICATED THAT HE WOULD "CONSIDER" WHETHER HE SHOULD MAKE SOME PROPOSALS OF HIS OWN ON THE BASIS OF ANNEX C. RICHARD ENCOURAGED HIM TO DO SO.

5. RICHARD SAID SEVERAL DELEGATIONS REPRESENTING DIFFERENT GROUPS OF WHITE RHODESIANS, INCLUDING A WOMEN'S GROUP AND A BUSINESSMENS GROUP, CAME TO SEE HIM, AS WELL AS ALAN SAVORY AND OTHER NON-RHODESIAN FRONT SUPPORTERS. ALTHOUGH

NONE OF THEM WERE ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT A BRITISH PRESENCE IN THE INTERIM GOVERNMENT, ALL OF THEM ACCEPTED THE IDEA AS ONE WAY OUT OF RHODESIA'S PRESENT SITUATION, WHICH CONTINUES TO DETERIORATE.

6. RICHARD ALSO MET THE LEADERS OF THE NEW ZIMBABWE UNITED PEOPLES ORGANIZATION (ZUPO) AND ASKED THEM WHETHER THEY WOULD BE WILLING TO FORM A COALITION WITH MR. SMITH IF THE OPPORTUNITY PRESENTED ITSELF. THEIR ANSWER WAS NEGATIVE, WHICH RICHARD THOUGHT TO BE SIGNIFICANT IF IT WERE SINCERE. THE ZUPO PEOPLE DID SAY, HOWEVER, THAT THEY WOULD LIKE TO ATTEND THE GENEVA CONFERENCE.

7. RICHARD ALSO SAW MUZOREWA BUT BECAUSE OF TIME RESTRAINTS WE LEFT THIS FOR LATER DISCUSSIONS JANUARY 3.

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8. JUST A FEW HOURS BEFORE RICHARD'S ARRIVAL, HAROLD HAWKINS GAVE BOWDLER SUBSTANTIALLY SAME ACCOUNT OF TALKS STRESSING THAT BRITISH PROPOSALS WERE "UNACCEPTABLE" AND "UNSALEABLE" DOMESTICALLY. HE SUMMED UP PRINCIPAL OBJECTION BY SAYING "WE COULD NOT SURRENDER OUR SOVEREIGNTY TO A SINGLE BRITISHER." NEVERTHELESS, HE ALSO EMPHASIZED THAT CONSIDERATION OF DIFFERENT IDEAS WOULD BE USEFUL AND NOTED THAT A SECOND SMITH-RICHARD MEETING WOULD TAKE PLACE IN SALISBURY IN ABOUT TEN DAYS.

9. COMMENT:

A. IT APPEARS THAT SMITH'S PRIVATE POSITION WAS NOT ESSENTIALLY DIFFERENT FROM THAT WHICH HE HAS TAKEN PUBLICLY: EMPHASIZING THE "CONTRACTUAL" NATURE OF THE "KISSINGER PACKAGE" ON THE ONE HAND AND THE UNACCEPTABILITY OF A BRITISH ROLE IN THE INTERIM GOVERNMENT ON THE OTHER.

HE MINCED NO WORDS IN TELLING RICHARD HOW MUCH THE WHITE RHODESIANS DISTRUST THE BRITISH, COMPLAINING OF UNFAIR TREATMENT ON INNUMERABLE OCCASIONS SINCE UDI, AND EXPRESSING THE VIEW THAT NO BRITISH COMMISSIONER COULD BE EXPECTED TO VOTE AGAINST THE AFRICANS ON ANY MATTER OF IMPORTANCE.

B. ALTHOUGH HE DESCRIBED SMITH'S POSITION AS DISSAPPOINTING, RICHARD SAID IT WAS NOT UNEXPECTED. ALTHOUGH SMITH HAD CLOSED THE DOOR, HE HAD NOT LOCKED IT, AND THE SITUATION
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WAS NOT HOPELESS. AT THE SAME TIME RICHARD OBVIOUSLY FEELS THAT SMITH IS NOT REALLY PREPARED TO ACCEPT ANYTHING THAT DOES NOT LEAVE HIM IN A POSITION OF PRIMARY INFLUENCE ON THE INTERIM GOVERNMENT, THAT HE WANTS TO CONTROL A BLOCKING MECHANISM IN ORDER TO USE IT FOR HIS OWN ADVANTAGE, AND THAT HE REALLY WAS NOT MAKING AN IRREVOCABLE COMMITMENT TO MAJORITY RULE WHEN HE MADE HIS SEPTEMBER 24 BROADCAST.

C. IN THE CIRCUMSTANCES, RICHARD AND HIS COLLEAGUES HOPE TO CONVINCE VORSTER THAT THEIR PROPOSALS ARE REASONABLE AND SMITH'S POSITION IS NOT. THEY EXPECT VORSTER TO ARGUE THAT SMITH WAS ASSURED IN PRETORIA THAT HE WOULD NOT BE PUSHED BEYOND ANNEX C, AND THEY MADE IT VERY CLEAR THAT THEY WOULD LAY THIS PROBLEM AT THE US DOORSTEP. RICHARD BELIEVES THE ONLY WAY SMITH WILL ACCEPT THE KIND OF BRITISH ROLE THEY ARE PROPOSING IS IF HE CAN BE GIVEN A GUARANTEE THAT GUERRILLA WARFARE WOULD STOP AND THAT SANCTIONS WOULD BE LIFTED. EVEN THEN, HE FEELS, IT WOULD BE NECESSARY FOR BRITAIN AND ESPECIALLY THE U.S. TO "LEAN" ON BOTH VORSTER AND SMITH.

D. WHILE I DID NOT ASK RICHARD FOR HIS THOUGHTS ABOUT FUTURE TACTICS, IT IS OBVIOUS THAT HE IS NOT CONSIDERING ANY EFFORT TO COME UP WITH IDEAS THAT MIGHT MEET SMITH'S DESIRE FOR A BLOCKING MECHANISM THAT IS NOT DEPENDENT UPON A BRITISH COMMISSIONER. THE BRITISH ARE CONVINCED THAT SUCH AN IDEA COULD NEVER BE SOLD TO THE AFRICANS AND THAT THE IDEAS IN THEIR PRESENT PROPOSAL REPRESENT THE MAXIMUM OBTAINABLE CONCESSION TO WHITE INTERESTS. THUS, IN SPITE OF SMITH'S NEGATIVE REACTION, I SUSPECT RICHARD WILL CONTINUE TO ADVOCATE THESE IDEAS IN THE HOPE THAT PRESSURES CAN BE BROUGHT TO BEAR ON ALL SIDES TO ACCEPT THEM. ONE LOGICAL EXTENSION OF THIS APPROACH WOULD BE TO EXPLORE AFRICAN IDEAS ABOUT GUARANTEES ON CEASING GUERRILLA WARFARE AND LIFTING SANCTIONS. CLEARLY, THERE IS ROOM FOR CONTINUED TALK, AND THE NEGOTIATING PROCESS IS NOT DEAD.

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10. NEXT STOPS: AFTER SEEING VORSTER AT OUBOSRAND NEAR
PORT ELIZABETH, RICHARD WILL RETURN TO PRETORIA LATE
JANUARY 3, PROCEED TO GABORONE JANUARY 4, PROBABLY SEEING
KHAMA JANUARY 5, GO TO MAPUTO JANUARY 5 OR 6 AND DAR ES
SALAAM JANUARY 7. RICHARD IS PRESENTLY INCLINED NOT TO GO TO
LUSAKA DURING THE FRONTLINE-NATIONALIST MEETING JANUARY 8-9
BUT WILL PROBABLY GO FROM DAR ES SALAAM TO NAIROBI TO SEE
KENYATTA, THEN BACK TO SALISBURY VIA LUSAKA.
BOWDLER

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Message Attributes

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